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COUNSELOR CONNECTION

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Murray High School student wins essay contest

A Murray High School junior is the winner of a \$500 scholarship essay contest, earning her school a photo shoot for pictures to be used in statewide college planning publications.

Alexandra Horrobin's essay drew judges in immediately: "Huge, extravagant proms and big, ol' boy athletic departments do not automatically qualify a high school as the best in Kentucky. Substance, not glitz, is required to earn that title."



The judges' unanimous selection of Horrobin's essay was based on her well-written testimonial to her school that went beyond test scores, clubs and athletics.

Murray High focuses on the "personal development of each student. (It) challenges you to step out of your safety zone," she continued. Students at Murray have been "prepared to play a big role in this world and motivated to explore the opportunities that life has to offer."

The essay captivated judges with its straightforward, unpretentious language. "This essay said a lot in 200 words," one judge said.

The contest, sponsored by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority and The Student Loan Peoplesm, gathered dozens of entries statewide. Judges said picking a winner was difficult. All of the entries were strong cheerleaders for their schools, whether academic, personal or athletic successes were cited.

Horrobin and other Murray High School students participated in a photo shoot at the school earlier this month. The pictures will be used in free college planning guides targeted at each year of high school, posters, brochures and publications from KHEAA and The Student Loan People.

Students can win iPod Shuffles

Any of your students who have not created an online account at GoHigherKY.org now have a chance to win an Apple iPod Shuffle. A drawing will be held from all the students who set up an account each month in 2006, and a winner will receive an Apple iPod Shuffle. The first winner will be awarded in February and will be drawn from the names of those who register in January.

GoHigherKY.org is the Web portal that guides your students through the entire college preparation experience, from early planning, selection, application and admissions to financial aid.

This is a win-win deal. Not only will they have access to great college information, they might even win an iPod.





Booklet gives details about Outreach presentations

Looking for help motivating middle and high school students to study hard and get good grades? Wish you had someone to guide you and your students through the maze of student financial aid? KHEAA and The Student Loan People can help!



Check out our new *Outreach Presentation Guide* for a complete listing of our free services, including age-appropriate presentations for students, financial aid workshops for parents, visits from the College Info Road Show, and training seminars on the GoHigherKY.org student and Counselor Center modules. Many of our presentations are aligned with the Kentucky Department of Education's Core Content for Assessment of Practical Living/Vocational Studies, allowing you the opportunity to meet curriculum requirements while providing information the college search and student financial aid processes.

To schedule a visit to your school or community event, or to receive a copy of the *Outreach Presentation Guide*, contact your regional outreach counselor or call toll-free at 1.800.928.8926, extension 7377.

KHEAA and The Student Loan People publish the *Counselor Connection* to share information about student financial aid, college preparation and college planning. Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please send them to publications@kheaa.com.



Kentucky's college savings plan reaches milestones

More Kentuckians than ever are taking advantage of the state's college savings plan, according to figures from KHEAA.



Through 2005, more than 9,000 accounts have been created with the Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust. The trust's assets at the end of 2005 surpassed the \$70 million mark.

"Trust account owners are continuing to invest at record levels in this program designed to help families save for college," said Dr. Joe L. McCormick, KHEAA's executive director.

An account may be opened for a beneficiary of any age for as little as \$15 if using payroll deduction. Earnings are exempt from Kentucky taxes, and withdrawals used for approved college costs are not subject to federal taxes through at least 2010.

The trust is managed by TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing Inc., a national leader in managing college savings plans. Savings can be used at colleges across the United States. For more information, call 1-877-KY TRUST or visit www.kysaves.com.

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Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority



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